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The problem of possible abuses of the system was explained by The Boy along the following lines. "First of all if an old man had become my 'grandfather' only recently, say just last week and I were a young man, no one would ordinarily ask me to appeal for him to my 'grandfather.' By strict right I could do so, and if no one else were available, I might be asked, but as an 'amateur,' as one lacking in experience, I would not be a good person to ask. An older, more experienced 'grandson' would be asked."

Besides choosing a "grandfather" the vower also selected, as a herald or crier for the Dance, some intelligent old man gifted as an orator. The crier's chief task was to walk or ride around the camp before and during the Dance announcing to the people whether the group would move and other decisions and agreements covering preparations for and procedure during the dance.

If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a sacred Dance was to be held, runners were sent by the vower to bid them foregather for the Dance. All members of the tribe were obliged to attend the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, and pretty surely the Drum, Kit-fox and Dog Dances. As regards the Fly Dance, this was ordinarily held in connection with one of the other Dances, so everybody would be present anyhow. As regards the Old Men's and Old Women's Dances, they were not so lively or colorful, and were held a little apart and the people did not take much interest in them and "did not go much" to them; attendance was apparently not required.

If any individual or group failed to come when summoned, the vower would request the soldiers of the Stars or Wolves as the case might be, compel attendance.[8] Even a war party could not start out if some one had vowed a dance and it was about ready to begin. So much for the types or personnel,—vower, associates, age-groups, ceremonial "grandfathers," criers, police, and "congregation,"—more or less common to all the Sacred Lodges. Personnel peculiar to particular Dances will be taken up later when each is described. Before describing the Dances one by one, some ritual observances common to all or many of them may be noted.

After the vower of a Dance had chosen his ritual grandfather

[8] For a detailed illustration of this point, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 49-51.

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For the duration of a Crazy Dance, political as well as ritual authority was vested in the age-group giving the Dance, and the ordinary personnel of government ceased for the time being to function. The Crazy Dancers ran everything; their word was law; they decided what was and was not to be done, even regarding the hunt.

The vower himself was for the time being in supreme command. He selected, as his councilors, however, four outstanding men, of middle age, older than the actual participant dancers, but not too old, men of prestige who had won recognition through merit, who had made their mark and were known as "chiefs," "successful and with good homes, good men." These four, according to Turn Toes, were chosen from among the next older age-group of the society, Stars or Wolves, to which the participant dancers age-group belonged, and were "elder brothers" of the dancers. Turn Toes emphasized more the ritual functions of these four "elder brothers." While the dancers themselves were in authority during the dance, and paid the expenses thereof, they would be helpless without knowledge of the proper rites and observances. The four "elder brothers" who had previously gone through the Crazy Dance, would be instructors in procedure to the group of younger dancers and would give the decisions thereon. The Boy emphasized more the political functions of the four "elder brothers." The vower together with these four constituted a sort of council or governing body. The five consulted and advised together on arrangements preparatory to and during the Dance, the "balance of power" resting with the vower in case of a deadlock among the four "elder brothers."

After these five got together they selected as their crier an intelligent old man who was known for his command of language. He sat in on their meetings, but without vote, so to speak. It was his duty to listen carefully and keep abreast of proceedings, and when decisions were made by the council of five he was told: "Go around the whole camp and announce that such-and-such shall be done." The five also chose as attendants or servants two young men, apparently two who had not previously joined the Crazy Dance. These two had no initiative; their task was to do what

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by his grandfather: "Do not seek doctoring power, but pray to the Supreme Being. This is enough." 782 869

According to The Boy, "Parents in advising their children how to conduct their lives would counsel them: 'Do not have ambition to have power like medicine men, else you will not live long. A medicine man forfeits his prospects of a long life and dies soon [a point to which we shall return presently]. It is far better and safer to just pray, that is, pray to the Supreme Being, and pray all the time. Make prayer the guiding rule in your lives.' Some people acquire power either by sleeping out on the hills or without seeking it. In either case they have to pay the price in shortened, restricted, danger-beset lives. The most important thing of all is to pray, beg, plead. This makes by far for the most happy and good life. This is far above seeking power."

On another occasion, The Boy explained the situation as follows: "However great or renowned these men and women with powers were in the old days, and however much they enjoyed the powers sought by and conferred upon them, they (the powers) were all right only while they lasted. The old-time Gros Ventres knew definitely that people who had these various powers would not live out their full span of life. Parents when raising their children would tell them to avoid that kind of life. They would exert all the influence in instructing their children not to go out on hills and seek power, but to have ambition to acquire fame and respect from exercise of natural ability. They tried to school their children along these lines and [to teach them] that it was considered weak to have the powers from these sources,—from rat, mountain, prairie chicken, and so forth. This my father, Lame Bull, told me all the time, and all the rest of the people told their sons and daughters this same rule of life. And the criers with the chiefs of the tribe, when they walked around on a nice calm day, would surely go into this matter, making it perhaps the main subject of their lecture. But still it [power seeking] was done, against such advice and against better judgment and better experience. All of these fellows who had these powers died prematurely." [203]

Thomas Main had many times heard his grandfather, Lame Bull,